

556 Crowfields Lane
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

January 10, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I am writing you to thank you for allowing Microsoft to get back to work. The settlement plan for Microsoft's antitrust case is more than an adequate remedy to the complaints of Microsoft's competitors and critics. Microsoft will share information with its competitors about Windows, and this will allow them to more easily install their own software on the operating system. Ultimately this will benefit all of the technology industry.

At a time of a weakening economy I think it is only sensible to end this controversy. Further sanctions for or restrictions on Microsoft will prove to be counterproductive. This country needs this company to continue to thrive and to lead the Information Technology Industry into this new and dangerous century.

I thank you for supporting this company and for reaching a fair and just settlement.

Sincerely,


Gerd Smith